

SECTION I: Understanding 4-H: Purpose, History and Structure

Lesson 1: Introducing 4-H Youth Development

Youth development has been defined as *an ongoing process through which young people attempt to meet their needs and to develop the competencies they perceive as necessary for survival and transition to adulthood*. Positive Youth Development is *development that is positive and productive for both youth and their communities*.

Youth development refers to the development of the whole person and is not focused on a single attribute, skill, or characteristic, but rather the mastery of competencies needed for happy and productive adulthood. Positive youth development occurs from an intentional process that promotes positive outcomes for young people by providing opportunities, choices, relationships, and the support necessary for youth to fully participate.

Youth development is the work of youth. Adults cannot do this work for them. But caring, knowledgeable and skilled adults can contribute to the success of young people as they grow and develop. Adults do this by providing environments for youth that are safe and nurturing and by expanding opportunities for experiences that will help young people develop skills they need for adulthood. Youth development professionals guide the community in providing these experiences.

In recent years, non-formal, out-of-school programs for youth have become recognized as key avenues for delivering these environments and opportunities. Universities and youth focused organizations have identified the research and knowledge base that supports effective programming for youth development as well as the effective principles and practices in delivering these programs. Course work leading toward a graduate degree in youth development is now available from several universities and university consortiums across the United States resulting in recognition of the need for preparation for participation in the field and providing support for professional staff development throughout the career cycle. A vocabulary to advocate for the work is in place.

4-H Youth Development is the non-formal, educational program for youth of the Cooperative State Research, Education and Extension Service of the U.S. Department of Agriculture. It has gained a national reputation for its work with youth throughout the past century. 4-H is unique in the



non-formal youth development field because it is a partner with the land grant university system and has access to the most current knowledge and research provided by those universities related to youth development. In addition, 4-H staff and Cooperative Extension Offices are located in almost every county in the U.S. and are connected through an extensive electronic network that assures access to the most current developments from the field. This blending of research and field knowledge provides noteworthy support for the 4-H Youth Development Professional.¹

Agencies who have partnered with 4-H in recent years have cited the following strengths that 4-H brings to the partnership.

- 4-H is a nationally recognized effective youth development education program.
- Cooperative Extension/4-H has a strong local, county, state and national infrastructure and international support.
- Cooperative Extension/4-H outreach service opportunities support communities and community service efforts.
- Cooperative Extension/4-H research-based youth curriculum materials support the mission of other youth organizations.
- Cooperative Extension/4-H staff are youth development professionals trained in adult education and youth programming and are capable and accessible resources.
- Cooperative Extension/4-H has a record of successful partnerships with youth serving organizations including worldwide youth programs within the military.



1. Adapted and used with permission from Huebner, A. & McFarland, M. (2002) *Youthworks Self-Study Guides: A Performance Based Training for Youth Development Professionals*.

Lesson 2: **Reviewing Youth Development Principles**

Because 4-H is the youth development arm of Land Grant University outreach, 4-H youth development professionals are responsible for knowing and applying to their programs the most current and valid information regarding support for the growth and development of the youth in their communities.

Many people do not know that non-formal, out-of-school youth development work has a professional knowledge base or that the quality of programs offered in these settings depends upon the training of professionals in the field. It is up to the youth development professional to explain the field to the community and to assure that community members recognize the vital role this profession plays in our society.

The goal of youth development programs is to help youth become fully prepared for transition to adulthood. Youth development professionals offer youth opportunities within healthy environments to master the competencies they will need to make this transition.

In order to master skills, young people must have certain needs met. Research tells us that they must have¹

1. safety and structure
2. a sense of belonging and membership
3. closeness and several good relationships
4. experience with gaining competence and mastering skills
5. independence and control over some part of their lives
6. self-awareness and the ability and opportunities to act on that understanding
7. a sense of self-worth and the ability and opportunities to contribute

Because youth grow and develop in the context of the family, community and society, these are the places where these needs must be met. Environments that provide the conditions for the healthy growth and development of youth can be described as those that: ²

1. Pittman, K. and Fleming, W. (1991). *A New Vision: Promoting Youth Development, testimony before the House Select Committee on Children, Youth and Families, Center for Youth Development and Policy Research, Academy for Educational Development. Washington, D.C.*

2. National 4-H Impact and Design Team, Astroth, Kirk; Chair (1999). *Critical Elements and Practices for 4-H. Montana Cooperative Extension Service, Montana State University. Bozeman, Montana*



- Are inclusive and create connections and sense of belonging including a positive relationship with a caring adult.
- Provide opportunities to value and practice service for others.
- Provide autonomy including an opportunity for self-determination.
- Provide opportunity for mastering skills and engaging in learning.
- Assure physical and emotional safety.
- Help youth vision a positive role for themselves in the future.

Programs that are offered for youth within these environments and that are successful in assuring changed behavior in the positive growth and development of the youth they serve:³

- Have well prepared and well supported staff who are offered ongoing training, who apply developmentally appropriate and culturally appropriate practices, and who know of and use community resources.
- Serve a broad based audience that reaches all youth in the community including those at high risk and reaches them early in their development.
- Offer comprehensive programming that is based upon the principles of youth development and that offers opportunities for youth to master skills in competence, character, and connections.
- Are designed with input from participants and involve and empower youth in their delivery.
- Have clearly defined outcomes that inform staff and participants of the developmental changes that are targeted.
- Collect and use evaluation information to refine the program and have the ability to become self-sustaining over time.

Youth Development professionals must understand and apply these two sets of components to their work. They must assure that the conditions necessary for healthy growth are present in the environments in which youth live, and that opportunities to develop competence are offered in the youth programs within those communities/environments.

In addition, 4-H professionals are responsible for the outcomes of working directly with youth to help individual youth achieve the skills they need. For this third responsibility, they must know the specific competencies to target for individual youth and identify the means by which those skills are learned.

3. Betts, S.C. & Dalla, R.L. (July 1995). *Youth, Families and Community: The Arizona Agenda*, the University of Arizona Cooperative Extension. Tucson, Arizona.



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Research has identified five competency areas that youth must master for positive development and preparation for adulthood. These are:⁴

1. **Health/physical competence:** having the appropriate knowledge, attitudes and behaviors that will ensure current and future health
2. **Personal/social competence:** personal skills such as an ability to understand one's emotions and practice self discipline; and interpersonal skills such as working with others and developing and sustaining friendships
3. **Knowledge, reasoning and creativity competence:** a broad base of knowledge, knowledge application skills, life long learning skills and an ability to appreciate and demonstrate creative expression.
4. **Vocational Competence:** Understanding and awareness of life options and the steps necessary to accomplish them. Adequate preparation for work and family life.
5. **Citizenship competency:** Understanding of the history and values of one's nation, community, race, ethnic and cultural heritage. Desire to be ethical and to be involved in contributing to the broader good.

The role of the Youth Development Professional is to provide environments that meet the needs of youth and to offer opportunities within those environment for youth to master the competencies that prepare them for successful adulthood.⁵

It is also important that youth development professionals are prepared to advocate for their work. Parents and community groups need to know how the activities and experiences that are offered through your youth program support the development of youth. Staff and volunteers who work in these programs must be able to explain how a given activity or series of experiences enhance the development of the young people who participate in them. Community support occurs when the importance of a youth program to the health of the community is recognized.

4. Pittman, K. and Fleming, W. (1991). *A New Vision: Promoting Youth Development*, testimony before the ouse Select committee on Children, Youth and Families, Center for Youth Development and Policy Research, Academy for Educational Development, Washington, D.C.

5. Huebner, A., and McFarland M. (2002) *Youthworks Self Study Guides: A Perfamance Based Training Program for Youth Development Professionals*, Kansas State University cooperative Extension and Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, Kansas State University, Manhattan, Kansas



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Lesson 3: **Discovering the Organizational Structure and History of 4-H**

4-H is made possible through the cooperative efforts of the Cooperative State Research, Education and Extension Service of the United States Department of Agriculture (CSREES/USDA) in Washington D.C., the land-grant University Cooperative Extension System and its partnering institutions, and the state and county governments. These public dollars are augmented by private monies raised by state 4-H Foundations, individual 4-H staff and volunteers, and the National 4-H Council. Local sponsors, partners, donors, alumni and others provide resources and incentives for educational programs, events and recognition.

National

CSREES/USDA (Cooperative State Research, Education and Extension Service of the United States Department of Agriculture) is the National Headquarters for 4-H and provides national leadership for the 4-H program. National administrators and program leaders identify nationwide issues for youth, catalyze system-wide responses and direct government resources for relevant and effective youth development programs. (www.reeusda.gov)

State

The land-grant universities in each state and the tribal colleges are partners with CSREES and administer Extension programs within their state. There could be more than one land-grant institution (an 1862 and an 1890s institution) in a state. Each land-grant university has a 4-H office. Those states in which there is a tribal college have an additional 4-H office that serves youth on reservations and in native communities.

In 1862, the Morrill Act provided land and partial funding for the development of a university in every state to make higher education accessible to the people of that state. These institutions make up the Land Grant University system.

In 1890, the second Morrill Act added 17 historically black colleges to the land grant system.

The Equity in Education Land-Grant Status Act of 1994 added 30 tribal colleges to the land grant system.

Funds are provided through the state to support extension faculty/staff in county 4-H programs. The state 4-H office, with input from the counties, provides the state program plans and policies and supports training for faculty, staff, and volunteers.



Tribal colleges support youth programming on reservations and in native communities.

A list of land-grant universities is in the Appendix. It is also available at: <http://www.reeusda.gov/1700/statepartners/usa>.

County

Each county has one or more 4-H agents with shared or prime responsibility for the 4-H Youth Development Program. Some counties that include large cities may have an additional office and staff serving just that city. The extension office's telephone number may be located in the blue government pages of the local phone book. County funding is provided to support faculty and staff and operations in the local 4-H office. The 4-H Agents, along with volunteers, start 4-H Clubs in the local communities and provide a variety of programs, activities, events and recognition for 4-H youth, parents and volunteers.

Foundations

National 4-H Council: this nonprofit organization that provides grants, establishes programs/initiatives, designs and publishes curriculum and reference materials and creates linkages fostering innovation and shared learning to advance the 4-H youth development movement, building a world in which youth and adults learn, grow and work together as catalysts for positive change. Council partners with 4-H at all levels-national, state and county. Council operates the National 4-H Center in Chevy Chase, MD. (www.fourhcouncil.edu)

State Foundations: Frequently there is a state 4-H Foundation, a nonprofit organization which provides grants and scholarships to support state and local programs. These foundations solicit funding for state-wide programming and often provide grants to county programs, funding for state-wide awards and scholarships, and support for special events. In some states, a 4-H camp facility is owned and operated by the state 4-H Foundation.

County Foundations: The presence of a 4-H foundation in a county is not common. However, when counties do have their own foundation, that entity acts in a similar fashion to the state foundation, providing funding and support that is limited to county program efforts.



Organizational Chart

National Level:

U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA): Congressionally approved home of the organization in which 4-H resides. Administered by:

U.S. Secretary of Agriculture: political appointment by the president.

Cooperative State Research, Education and Extension Service (CSREES): One of many agencies within USDA. Has 8 units Administered by Administrator of CSREES.

Families, 4-H and Nutrition: One of 8 units within CSREES. Administered by Deputy Administrator for F4-HN.

Youth Development: One of two units within F4-H N and the National Headquarters for 4-H. Administered by: Director, Youth Development

National Program Leaders: 6 program leaders provide program and policy leadership and provide financial assistance through securing and managing grants to land grant universities.

State Level:

Land Grant University: State and Tribal partner with CES. Has many colleges Administered by: University President, (sometimes called Chancellor).

Cooperative Extension Service (CES): Responsible for outreach and bringing knowledge and research generated at the university to address the local needs of citizens in communities across the state. Has many departments or units.

Administered by: Director of Cooperative Extension.

1862 State Extension Specialists: (usually faculty positions) Responsible for translating research to application and supporting county staff and program through teaching, assisting in grant preparation and development of curricula and support materials. CES faculty may be part of the academic department that supports their field of expertise as well as accountable to the extension system.

1890 Extension Specialists deliver programs in counties of regions of the state where needs exist for specific program priorities. All programs focus on the Extension System's nationwide initiatives and provide educational assistance to limited-resource farmers,



families and youth helping them acquire skills that improve the quality of their lives and communities.

1994 Extension Specialists deliver programs to native populations on reservations and in native communities in cities across the state.

(Area/District Extension Specialists: some states group counties together to provide additional staff support. These areas or districts have offices in one of the counties within the multiple county area.

Administered by: Area/District Director & State Associate Director 4-H)

Extension Youth Development: Department within CES responsible for applying knowledge and research related to the growth and development of youth to community youth development efforts across the state.

Administered by the State Extension 4-H Leader (sometimes called the Associate Director of 4-H Youth Development.)

Tribal Extension Youth Development: Department in Tribal College CES responsible for applying knowledge and research related to the growth and development of youth to youth on reservations and in native communities in metropolitan areas. *Administered by the Tribal Extension Youth Development Director.*

County Level:

1862 schools serve audiences in every county in the U.S. through the county extension system. Since 1890 and 1994 schools have a targeted audience, they do not use a county based delivery system.

County Commissioners: Approve the county funding of the Extension budgets. Elected positions.

County Boards: Approve direction and implementation of all county extension programs. The degree to which county agents are accountable to extension boards varies according to the way in which state funding is distributed to counties in each state. Elected positions.

County Extension Educators: Responsible for coordinating the needs of the county with state and county supported extension outreach and for implementing appropriate program offerings. Usually county offices consist of a team of county agents; typically made up of an Agriculture agent, a Family & Consumer Sciences Agent and a 4-H agent. Some larger counties may have staff to address additional functions. Smaller counties may have fewer staff who share programmatic responsibilities or may share staff with neigh-



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boring counties. One of these agents will serve as the County or Multi-county Director. Agents are accountable to both the director of extension or designated administrator and to the county extension council.

4-H Agent: responsible for the delivery of all aspects of the county 4-H Youth Development program. 4-H agents work with volunteers, parents, youth, schools and community organizations to provide opportunities for youth to master life skills.

Volunteer Leaders: Adults and older youth who serve as club leaders, project leaders, camp counselors etc. Some volunteer leaders work directly with youth and some with other volunteers as trainers and mentors. All are essential to effective 4-H delivery.





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Lesson 4: ***Understanding the Culture of 4-H***

This section will provide you with some of the basic information about 4-H.

Culture

Webster defines culture as the concepts, habits, skills, arts, instruments and institutions of a given people in a given place. Basically, the culture within a group is what everybody knows that everybody else knows and includes the visible expression as well as the invisible roots of the culture.

Most groups have spoken or unspoken expectations for member's behavior. These may include rules, rituals, language, demonstration of support for commonly held beliefs, etc. Youth development professionals know the importance of helping young people discover quickly the norms of the group they have joined.

Each 4-H group will have a set of behavioral expectations unique to that group, and these expectations may or may not be clearly defined for all members. However, all 4-H groups will follow certain practices within the club or group that are clearly defined in a document developed by national program leaders titled 4-H FACTS.

This section highlights the concepts and customs to assure that those new to 4-H and those who are already a part of 4-H have the same understanding of the basic aspects of the culture of 4-H.

What is 4-H?

4-H is the youth development outreach of the Land Grant Universities, the Cooperative Extension System, and USDA. It is made up of a community of young people across America who are learning life skills and are supported in this developmental process by caring adult leaders. 4-H'ers are actively involved in educational projects that are fun and that use quality curriculum incorporating the most current research and knowledge available through the Land Grant University system.

4-H youth

- Have fun
- Meet new people
- Learn and do new things
- Gain life skills
- Build self-confidence
- Practice responsibility
- Set and achieve goals
- Receive recognition for their efforts and accomplishments



4-H Colors

The 4-H colors are green and white. The white symbolizes purity and high ideals. The green, nature's most prominent color, growth.

4-H Pledge

The 4-H Pledge is a statement of the outcomes desired for youth from their involvement in the 4-H Youth Development program. It reminds members of the four areas of growth 4-H targets and reinforces the importance of mastery of life skills. The organizational structure the pledge describes will be discussed in the Framework section of this handbook. Delegates to the 1927 National 4-H Club Camp in Washington, D.C. adopted the pledge. The phrase, "my World" was added to the pledge in 1973.

I Pledge ... My Head to clearer thinking,
 My Heart to greater loyalty,
 My Hands to larger service, and
 My Health to better living,
 For My Club, my Community, my Country and my World.

4-H Name and Emblem

The 4-H Youth Development Program is represented by a popular, recognizable image that consists of a green four-leaf clover with a right turned stem and the letter "H" in white or gold on each leaflet. The text, 18 U.S.C. 707, appears with the emblem. This emblem became the official 4-H emblem by an act of Congress in 1948.

Use of the 4-H name or emblem signifies agreement to the principles of youth development as promoted through 4-H. The Secretary of the United States Department of Agriculture holds the name and emblem in trust for the educational and character-building purposes of the 4-H program. The 4-H name and 4-H Clover are protected by Title 18 of the United States Code, Section 707 (18 U.S.C. 707) and are afforded the same status and regard as the White House and Presidential Seals. Therefore, they may only be used as authorized by the statute, regulations and guidelines, and according to the authorization of the Secretary or designated representative.

Specific Ways to Use and Display the 4-H Emblem (print and electronic):

- Always use the specific image (outline/shape) from www.national4-hheadquarters.gov. Do not alter the image.
- Green leaves (Color – PMS - 347)
- Gold or white H's on each leaf
- Stem to right
- "Notice" statement, 18 U.S.C. 707 to right of stem and below



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- lower right leaf or other location provided by USDA
- The emblem should always have a position of prominence in any design
- Do not superimpose anything over the Emblem, use it as a watermark, etc.
- When used by collaboration, the 4-H Emblem should be the same size and proportion as the other logos.
- When used electronically, the same standards as print versions should apply.
- Additional standards are available on www.national4-headquarters.gov

Authorities for Approving Use of the 4-H Name and Emblem:

Secretary of Agriculture has delegated authority to:

- Administrators, CSREES, USDA, (F4-HN Staff) for multi-state use.
- State Extension Directors (1862 land-grant), Administrators (1890 land-grant), Presidents (1994 land grant) for use within state boundaries.
- County 4-H Extension Staff (agents, educators, etc.) for use within a single county or boundary.

Process for 4-H Club Authorization and Responsibilities:

- Letter to County 4-H Staff
- County staff responds in writing and provides certificate charter
- 4-H Club submits names of members, leaders, and other requested information

Detailed information on the use of the name and emblem, statute, regulations, guidelines, information and downloadable 4-H emblems can be found at: <http://www.national4-hheadquarters.gov>.



National 4-H Headquarters web site:
www.national4-hheadquarters.gov





Lesson 5: **Understanding 4-H Youth Development** **Delivery**

Organized Clubs

4-H provides youth development opportunities for youth through a variety of delivery methods. The 4-H club is one of those delivery methods. Each state has its own policies governing 4-H clubs, but all clubs would fall into the following description.

4-H clubs are organized groups of boys and girls who elect officers and are supported by adult volunteer leaders. The 4-H club conducts meetings and activities throughout the year — usually holding 6 or more official meetings annually. Club meetings typically include the conducting of some business by the officers, an educational program and a group building or recreational activity. The club frequently includes opportunities for leadership, citizenship, and public speaking. It may meet in any location and is authorized through the county and state to use the 4-H name and emblem. Youth ages 8-18 (as of January 1 of the current year) are eligible to be members. (Some states use grades in school to meet membership eligibility standards instead of age.) Some states have club options for younger members (5 to 7 years) called Clover Clubs, Cloverbuds, Mini 4-H etc. Where these clubs exist, they focus on cooperative learning and do not participate in competitive events.

Clubs that meet regularly, conduct a business meeting, address any county 4-H requests and community issues and then focus on one project that the entire membership experiences together are referred to as single project clubs. These clubs are less complicated in structure and thus easier to start.

The historical club format is the multi-project club that meets regularly to conduct a business meeting, address county 4-H requests and community issues, provide an educational program presentation or activity and then offer a selection of projects delivered through project meetings held at times outside the club meeting. This format provides a wider choice of learning experiences for the 4-Her but requires more leaders for the additional project meetings and is more complicated to manage.

Youth can enroll in one or more project areas in a multi-



project community club. In a single-project community club, all the members are enrolled in the same project but may be active in different levels based on skill or knowledge. In all clubs, members are encouraged to do a community service or service learning project during the 4-H year. All clubs require at least one designated adult club leader.

Clubs will be discussed in more detail in Section III.

4-H Delivery Methods

4-H uses a variety of methods for reaching youth with opportunities that help them grow and develop in positive ways including:

- Organized clubs
 - Special Interest or Single Project Clubs
 - Multi-Project Clubs (Community Clubs)
 - 4-H Afterschool
 - Home School Clubs
 - Community Service Clubs
- Day Camps
- Overnight camping
- Trips
- School Enrichment programs
- Individual Study/ Mentoring
- Family Activities
- Instructional TV
- Events: Competitive (Fairs, Judging etc) and Non-Competitive (Dances, Lock-ins)
- Additional methods identified as appropriate for the audience reached

